

Official Reports of Deaths by 'State Agents' in Chile

– What the Government can get away with?

The Chilean Undersecretary of Interior, Rodrigo Ubilla, recently claimed in a press conference, that 11 people had died under circumstances of looting and fires on commercial buildings and marketplaces, primarily in Región Metropolitana (Santiago) [1]. The Intendent of Santiago, Karla Rubilar, communicated October 20th, that two persons had died in fires, according to a preliminary report from the Chilean police (Carabineros de Chile) [2]. According to an INDH report from October 22nd, 1894 had been detained, 269 injured, of which 137 had been injured by firearms. Only 5 were categorised as deaths due to violence from 'state agents' [3]. That is one more attributed to state violence compared to Ubilla's account, which however was earlier that day [1].

This information suggests several things which are sensible to be cautious about. To begin with, the statistics imply that about 3.5 % of the ones hit by firearms die. This implied cautiousness is not entirely consistent with the deployment of military force – or the observations about how Carabineros act when unaware of being observed. A prudent approach to videos and quasi-anonymous affirmations on social media is certainly in place, and so is independent inquiry. With these reservations in mind, there is a video where armed forces corner a man, wound him with a shot, and seem to proceed with an arrest [4]. Another shows how armed forces throw out a seemingly dead man from a police transport [5]. Both videos seem credible, as they would require quite a bit to stage. A person at home in history should have no problems to evaluate the content.

In essence, all four deaths admitted by Ubilla are easy to look up online or have figured in commercial media. All cases are also possible to find in the alternative platform Piensa Prensa [6]. This is exactly the problem. It is remarkable that all cases that the Government of Chile admits, also are the ones which they cannot deny.

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*This is a translation. Original version published online October 23 in Swedish.

[1] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XbuWhLwFUo>

[2] <https://twitter.com/KarlaEnAccion/status/1185780278234701824>

[3] <https://twitter.com/inddhh/status/1186832456089047040/photo/1>

[4] <https://twitter.com/PiensaPrensa/status/1186835451291852800>

[5] <https://twitter.com/PiensaPrensa/status/1186494237908582400>

[6] <https://twitter.com/PiensaPrensa>

The four cases:

*PP=Pienda Prensa

C1 ruta 5 sur (Curicó) Oct 21/22

https://twitter.com/Enomeius_1991/status/1186479187835707393

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-Np85I7sqQ> ; (&PP)

C2&3 Oct 20 (Serena/Coquimbo, 2 deaths.)

<https://www.biobiochile.cl/noticias/nacional/region-de-coquimbo/2019/10/20/confirman-muerte-de-una-persona-por-disparo-en-mall-de-la-serena-otra-esta-grave.shtml> ; (&PP)

C4 Oct 21 (Talcahuano)

<https://twitter.com/RiffoMario/status/1186431769974890496> ; (&PP)